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FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0012
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5156
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7813
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7687
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 1241
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 9296
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 6361
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0108
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 5202
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1741
RHHMUNA/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 001536

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TAGS: [TBIO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [WHO](#) [CN](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO MOFA ON TAIWAN AND WHO: TAIWAN RAISES
MORE QUESTIONS ON "TWO-BY-TWO" DEBATE

REF: A. SECSTATE 66826

[1](#)B. TAIPEI 01415

TAIPEI 00001536 001.2 OF 002

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. AIT presented Ref A demarche on Taiwan participation in WHO to Vice Foreign Minister Michael Kau, highlighting U.S. requests for Taiwan to unilaterally adhere to the IHR's and to agree to the "two-by-two" debate proposal. Kau responded that Taiwan is nearly ready to go forward with the IHR declaration, but that the two-by-two debate will be politically problematic. To make it easier to agree to the two-by-two proposal, Kau said, Taiwan requested the U.S. to press WHO to provide a letter accepting Taiwan's request to participate in the GOARN and to join with Japan in co-sponsoring Taiwan's bid for WHO observer status. AIT responded that these new requests were unfeasible in the short time remaining before the WHA and that Taiwan needs to focus on practical steps forward, including the IHR pledge and the two-by-two debate. Please see action requests in paras 9 and 10. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) AIT Deputy Director Keegan presented the demarche (Ref A) in support of Taiwan access to the Global Outbreak and Response Network (GOARN) and clarifying the U.S. position on a possible Taiwan WHA observer bid to Vice Foreign Minister Michael Kau (Ying-mao) May 2. The Deputy Director noted that he and the Director had earlier the same day met with a number of like-minded country representatives in Taipei, who had proven both well-informed about, and generally supportive of, Taiwan's participation in WHO activities.

[1](#)3. (SBU) After presenting the demarche, the Deputy Director explained that in addition to encouraging Taiwan to unilaterally assume the responsibilities of the International Health Regulations (IHRs), the U.S. also requested Taiwan's response to our proposal for "two-by-two" debates in the WHA Plenary Session and General Committee, first presented to Kau on April 1 (Ref B).

14. (SBU) VFM Kau told the Deputy Director that in his visit to Tokyo last week he had found strong Japanese support for Taiwan participation in WHO activities, though he acknowledged that Japan also considers Taiwan WHO observer status to be only a long-term goal. Kau agreed with the Deputy Director that the EU was taking a more active role supporting Taiwan participation in WHO activities. On the other hand, he complained, both Beijing and the WHO Secretariat were undermining Taiwan's efforts by putting out

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"misleading" information that Taiwan is already able to participate in GOARN activities. The Secretariat claimed to have a Taiwan focal point, but it turned out to be two former CDC officials now teaching at a university in Tainan. He argued that this did not constitute effective Taiwan participation in GOARN.

15. (SBU) On the IHR commitment, VFM Kau said, Taiwan was nearly ready to move forward. While some questions remained about the precise method of making the announcement, he stressed that he was confident Taiwan could do this and promised a decision "in the next two weeks." Department of Health International Affairs Director-General Peter Chang asked the Deputy Director to query Washington on the appropriate way for Taiwan to announce its IHR commitment.

16. (SBU) The two-by-two debate proposal, however, would be more difficult without some symbolic victory to satisfy domestic critics who would call this a defeat, Kau explained. It would "very hard" for the Taiwan government to retreat and replace its bid for observership with a "two-by-two" debate unless Taiwan's "meaningful participation" in WHO activities could be clearly verified. Kau requested U.S. assistance in (1) eliciting an official WHO response to Taiwan's application for GOARN participation (see April 13 letter from TCDC Director Steve Kuo to GOARN Director Michael

TAIPEI 00001536 002 OF 002

Ryan), and (2) co-sponsoring with Japan a Taiwan observership resolution at the WHA. These, Kau claimed, would constitute the necessary verification of participation and would enable Taiwan to "pragmatically" agree to the two-by-two proposal.

17. (SBU) The Deputy Director responded that Taiwan had made considerable progress in participating in WHO activities over the past year. Taiwan, however, was looking for symbolic gestures, while the U.S. was focusing on practical steps forward and did not want to see the gains made through a year of hard work held hostage to a quest for symbols. He reminded VFM Kau the U.S. had earlier proposed two steps that would help Taiwan move forward: (1) unilateral adherence to the IHRs, and (2) Taiwan agreement to the two-by-two debate proposal.

18. (SBU) If Taiwan adhered to the IHRs, the Deputy Director continued, the U.S., and probably other countries, would publicly endorse this move, giving the Taiwan government the symbolic victory it seeks. This victory, he argued, is achievable and will not require a formal document from the WHO to Taiwan, something that has proven impossible to secure for a whole year. Regarding the two-by-two debate, however, the Deputy Director continued, it appeared Taiwan was now seeking to set new conditions. In fact, each of the three times AIT has requested a response to the two-by-two proposal, he noted, Taiwan has put forward more requests. With two weeks remaining before the WHA, it is time to focus on practical steps to increase Taiwan's participation in WHO activities, and not get sidetracked by symbolic gestures.

19. (SBU) VFM Kau then asked two final questions. First, would Secretary Leavitt be willing to write to WHO in support of Taiwan participation in WHO activities, and second, would he be willing to meet with Taiwan Health Minister Hou Shen-mou? The Deputy Director responded that both of these

issues were already under consideration, but that a meeting would have to be scheduled by the U.S. and Taiwan missions in Geneva.

¶10. (SBU) Comment and Action Request. It is clear that Vice Foreign Minister Kau is hoping for additional expressions of U.S. support before recommending to his superiors, the Foreign Minister and likely the President as well, that they accept the limitations of the two-by-two format for both the WHA General Committee and Plenary. Please confirm whether or not Washington is prepared to co-sponsor the Taiwan agenda item. We will then inform Kau and, as necessary, his superiors, that they must commit quickly to the two-by-two arrangement.

YOUNG